The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives correct accounts of, and authentic interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Mistakes are often the best teachers of all.—Froude.

WHOLE NO. 1355 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1937 | FRANK MORRISON, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 27, NO. 14

(From March 30 Issue of A. F. of L. Weekly News Service Supplement)

Minimum Wage Law For Women Sustained by U. S. Supreme Court

Five-to-Four Decision on Washington State Law Reverses Ruling Made Fourteen Years Ago Holding District of Columbia Law Unconstitutional.

By A. F. of L. News Service.

Washington, D. C.—The Supreme Court of the United States was held by observers here to have established a revolutionary precedent in its five-to-four decision upholding the constitutionality of the State of Washington's minimum wage law for women and children.

By this action the Supreme Court reversed its decision in 1923 holding the District of Columbia minimum wage law for women unconstitutional on the ground that it deprived women workers of the right to contract for the sale of their labor power for even less-than-living wages, which right the court at that time held was a property right duly protected by the Federal Constitution.

In addition the court ruled contrary to the decision handed down last year in the New York minimum wage law case which was held unconstitutional by a majority opinion standing squarely on the District of Columbia decision.

This momentous opinion of the Supreme Court, which opens the way for minimum wage legislation for women in every State in the Union, was brought about by the switch of Associate Justice Roberts from the "conservative" to the "liberal" group. Last year he was with the majority of the court which outlawed the New York minimum wage law. In this decision he joined with Chief Justice Hughes and Associate Justices Brandeis, Cardozo and Stone in upholding the Washington Act.

HUGHES WRITES MAJORITY OPINION

The majority opinion in the Washington State case was written by Chief Justice Hughes, who candidly admitted that the importance of the question demanded a "re-examination" of the District of Columbia case [judicially known as the "case of Adkins vs. Children's Hospital"] by the Supreme Court, with the result that the court's decision in the District of Columbia case "should be, and is, overruled," and the judgment of the Supreme Court of the State of Washington that the Washington minimum wage law was constitutional "is affirmed."

A minority opinion written by Associate Justice Sutherland and concurred in by Associate Justices Van Deventer, McReynolds and Butler expressed unfaltering allegiance to the reactionary majority opinion in the District of Columbia case and held that the action of the Constitution prevented any State or the United States from enacting minimum wage laws to protect women workers from low-living standards imposed by unscrupulous employers.

FREEDOM OF CONTRACT DISCUSSED

In discussing the alleged deprivation of freedom of contract which was the main reason advanced by the former decision of the court holding the District of Columbia minimum wage law unconstitutional, Justice Hughes said:

"The principle which must control our decision is not in doubt. The constitutional provision invoked is the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment governing the State. . . . the due process clause invoked in the Adkins case governed Congress. In each case the violation alleged by those attacking minimum wage regulations for women is deprivation of freedom of contract. What is this freedom?

"The Constitution does not speak of freedom of contract. It speaks of liberty and prohibits the deprivation of liberty without due process of law. In prohibiting that deprivation the Constitution does not recognize an absolute and uncontrollable liberty. Liberty in each case of its phases has its history and connotation. But the liberty safeguarded is liberty in a social organization which requires the protection of law against the evils which menace the health, safety, morals and welfare of the people. Liberty under the Constitution is thus necessarily subject to the restraint of due process, and regulation which is reasonable in relation to its subject and is adopted in the interests of the community is due process.

FREEDOM IS QUALIFIED RIGHT

Pointing out that in many cases the Supreme Court had held that "freedom of contract is a qualified and not an absolute right," the opinion continued:

"There is no absolute freedom to do as one wills or to contract as one chooses. The guaranty of liberty does not withdraw from legislative supervision that wide department of activity which consists of the power to contracts, or deny to government the power to provide restrictive safeguards. Liberty implies the absence of arbitrary restraint, not immunity from reasonable regulations and prohibitions imposed in the interests of the community."

Social Security Benefits 224,000 in Rhode Island

Washington, D. C. (AFLNS)—Rhode Island residents to the number of 224,000 receive benefits under the Federal Social Security, according to a statement by the Social Security Board. The beneficiaries include 178,000 employed on jobs covered by the State unemployment compensation law, the board said.

(From March 30 Issue of A. F. of L. Weekly News Service Supplement)

High Court Upholds Railway Labor Act

Nation's Supreme Judicial Tribunal Decides Case Involving Company Union in Favor of A. F. of L. Unit.

By A. F. of L. News Service.

Washington, D. C.—In a unanimous decision the Supreme Court of the United States affirmed the constitutionality of the Railway Labor Act of 1926 as amended in 1934, which declares that railroad employes "shall have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing," and that "the majority of any craft or class of employes shall have the right to determine who shall be the representatives of the craft or class for the purposes of this Act."

The law also prohibits railway carriers from denying their employes the right to organize and from interfering with that right, and in addition declares it is illegal for carriers to give financial support to company unions.

HISTORY OF CASE

Acting in conformity with this statute, the National Mediation Board held an election of the employes of the mechanical department of the Virginian Railway Company to choose a collective bargaining representative. The employes elected System Federation No. 40 of the Railway Employes' Department of the American Federation of Labor. The board certified the election, but the management of the railway company refused to deal with the A. F. of L. union. In the meantime the railway management financed the expenses of and made an agreement with a company union which the mechanical Department Association of the Virginian Railway.

The lower Federal court decided that the Virginian Railway company had violated the Railway Labor Act by refusing to deal with the A. F. of L. Union, upheld the constitutionality of the Act and issued a decree requiring the company to deal with System Federation No. 40 as the sole representative of the craft represented. The railway appealed the case to the United States Supreme Court, which without a dissenting voice ruled that Congress was clearly within its constitutional rights in enacting the legislation and that the railway company was required to recognize as the representative of the mechanical department System Federation No. 40, which was legally elected in accordance with the Act.

DISCUSSES COMPANY UNION

"We cannot ignore," said Justice Stone in reading the opinion of the Supreme Court upholding the constitutionality of the Act, "that Congress, deliberately expressed in legislation, that where the obstruction of a company union is removed, the meeting of employers and employes of the representative is a powerful aid to industrial peace. . . ."

"With the coercive influence of the company union removed, and the way in the interest of both parties in avoiding a strike, we cannot assume that negotiation, as required by the decree will not result in agreement, or lead to successful mediation or arbitration, or that the attempt to secure one or another through the relief which the district court gave is not worth the effort.

"PUBLIC CONCERN INVOLVED"

"More is involved than the settlement of a private controversy without appreciable consequence to the public. The peaceable settlement of labor controversies, especially where they are seriously impair the ability of an interstate rail carrier to perform its service to the public, is a matter of public concern."

OBLIGATORY NEGOTIATION

"The fact that Congress has indicated its purpose to make negotiation obligatory is in itself a declaration of public interest. It does not, however, make its pervasive in inducing courts to give relief.

The opinion pointed out that the provisions of the Act neither compel the employer to enter into any agreement nor preclude it from entering into any contract with labor unions.

Moreover, the court said, the provisions "do not 'interfere with the normal exercise of the right of the carrier to select its employes or to discharge them."

W. H. JOHNSTON, LABOR LEADER, TAKEN BY DEATH

Was President of International Machinists Association from 1912 to 1926—Served on War Labor Board With Taft.

By A. F. of L. News Service.

Washington, D. C.—William Hugh Johnston, former president of the International Association of Machinists, died at his home here Tuesday after a long illness. He was 62 years old.

Mr. Johnston was elected president of the International Association in 1912, and served in that capacity until 1926 when he retired after suffering a stroke of paralysis.

Supported La Follette for President

He was chairman of the Conference on Progressive Political Action which brought about the nomination of the Progressive party's La Follette-Wheeler presidential ticket in 1924, which polled almost 5,000,000 votes. He campaigned actively for the ticket, and fought against the disentegration of the Progressive party after the election.

"If we fail to hold together we deserve the contempt and ridicule of the 4,000,000 who cast their ballots for Senator La Follette," he said.

During the World War he went abroad with the late Samuel Gompers, then president of the American Federation of Labor, and the Labor Mission, and lectured throughout the United Kingdom. He went into the trenches in France as an observer in the war which it meant to stand in the line of the fighting.

Later, President Wilson named him a member of the National War Labor Board, of which the late Chief Justice William Howard Taft was chairman.

Opposed to Anti-Strike Legislation

In 1919, when reactionaries in Congress proposed drastic anti-strike legislation, Mr. Johnson threatened to call an immediate strike of the 350,000 members of the International Association if it was passed.

Mr. Johnston was born in Nova Scotia, the son of Adam and Jane Murray Johnston. He came to the United States in 1885 and became an apprentice at Providence, R. I., in the shops of the Rhode Island Locomotive Works.

He was a charter member of the association of Machinists in 1895. He was elected president of the New England district of the organization in 1903 and became business representative in 1907. In 1909 he was elected president of District 44, embracing all machinists in government departments, and in 1912 was chosen International president of the Machinists' Association.

Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Harriet L. Johnston, and a sister, Mrs. Fred Warburton of Providence R. I.

EDITORIAL

A NOTABLE RESURRECTION

The permanency of judicial precedents is so firmly established that people have become accustomed to regard them as absolutely immovable. This is especially true in connection with decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States. A decision once reached by that august body has automatically taken its place as a fixed part of our court-made law.

The majority opinion of the Supreme Court reversing the decision made by the court in 1923 holding the District of Columbia minimum wage law for women unconstitutional is therefore an outstanding event in American judicial history.

The District of Columbia law was signed by President Woodrow Wilson on September 19, 1918. The minimum wage board charged with administering the statute fixed the lowest wage which employers were permitted to pay twelve thousand women. The rates were $14.50, $15.50 and $16.50 per week, depending on occupational status. Even these low wages were challenged by employers in the district of Columbia sweatshop employers, who charged that the minimum wage law violated the Federal Constitution.

The law finally reached the U. S. Supreme Court in 1923 in the case of Adkins versus Children's Hospital. In a majority opinion written by Associate Justice Sutherland the sweatshop employers were upheld. The District of Columbia law was unconstitutional because it deprived women workers of the alleged constitutional liberty to contract for the sale of their labor power at even less than living wages if their economic conditions compelled them to accept such wages imposed by anti-social employers. On the ground that the Supreme Court reasoned the law to the tomb of socially-just statutes killed by judicial fiat. The astonishment of the District of Columbia law stopped all effective efforts to enact minimum wage legislation throughout the Nation, the Court having used its decision in that case to invalidate the New York State minimum wage law as recently as last Summer.

Then, on March 29, 1937, one of the most momentous decisions in American judicial history occurred. The nine Supreme Judges of the Nation's highest judicial tribunal met in the Supreme Court Building for the purpose of handing down their decision in formal decisions. One of these decisions concerned the Washington State minimum wage law for women. The constitutionality of which had been contested by a sweatshop hotel owner of that State but upheld by the Washington State Supreme Court. The hotel owner appealed the case to the minimum wage decreed for chambermaids. This case on the opinion of the U. S. Supreme Court overruled the District of Columbia law.

The decision in the Washington case was read by Chief Justice Hughes. Without mincing words the Chief Justice declared that the public interest demanded a re-examination of the Court's decision in the District of Columbia case. Chief Justice Hughes declared that the public is entitled to a reasonable argument against the less-than-living wages which unscrupulous employers force helpless women workers to accept in order to keep body and soul alive and asserted the indubitable right of both the States and the Federal Government to provide for fixing minimum wages for women.

The large audience of Government officials, lawyers, welfare workers, and labor leaders who filled the Supreme Court chamber to overflowing sensed that they were listening to one of the most unusual pronouncements ever made by the Court. They were held spellbound when Chief Justice Hughes closed the opinion with this startling revolutionary statement:

"Our conclusion is that the case of Adkins v. Children's Hospital should be, and is, overruled, and the judgment of the Supreme Court of Washington is affirmed."

Thus by the whim of its existing but rarely exercised power to reverse its own decisions, the Supreme Court recovered the tomb in which the District of Columbia minimum wage law had slept the sleep of the dead for fourteen years and brought it back to life a little pale from its incarceration but animated with such power that employers in the Nation's capital belonged the authority for information as to when the reborn statute would require them to revise and raise their wage scales for women workers.

This was the climax of the most notable judicial resurrection by the Supreme Court of a statute ever executed by the Court itself.

Verily, the force of precedents is not over—even in the Supreme Court of the United States!

(From March 30 Issue of A. F. of L. Weekly News Service Supplement)

A. F. OF L. GAINS CITED BY MORRISON

Membership Is 1,604,664 Larger Than in 1933—Affiliated Unions Have Enrolled Over 300,000 New Members During the Last Seven Months—Many Charters Issued.

By A. F. of L. News Service.

Washington, D. C.—The successful organization activities of the American Federation of Labor and its affiliated national and international unions since July, 1935, and especially since September 1, 1936, were revealed in the following statement by Frank Morrison, secretary-treasurer of the Federation:

"The A. F. of L. membership paid and reported for March, 1937, is 2,721,466, which shows an increase of 1,604,664, over the membership for the year ending August 31, 1933.

"The affiliated unions, including the local trade and federal labor unions, and not including the ten national and international unions that stand automatically suspended since September 5, 1936, show an increase since September 1, 1936, of 308,987 paid and reported members over the average membership for the fiscal year ending August 31, 1936.

"The sentiment for organization is running high and we have been receiving applications and issuing during the past four months a greater number of charters than has been received since the month of June, 1934.

"The local unions directly affiliated with the A. F. of L. are securing increases in wages and more satisfactory working conditions.

Five National and International Unions Chartered

"In 1936, charters were issued to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the American Newspaper Guild.

"Since September, 1936, charters have been issued to the International Fur and Leather Workers' Union and Novelty Workers' Union, with 10,000 members, with their headquarters in New York City; the International Association of Cleaning and Dye House Workers, with a potential membership of many thousands with their headquarters at Cleveland, Ohio; and the American Federation of Radio Artists and Municipal Employes, with their headquarters at Madison, Wisconsin.

"We have seven national unions in the national unions in the making. They will be formed from local unions directly affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, namely: Cement Workers, Aluminum Ware Workers, Filling Station Employes, Agricultural and Fruit Workers; Flour, Feed and Cereal Workers; Optical Workers and Distillery Workers.

"Each of these seven groups has a National Council, with a Chairman, and they meet at intervals to discuss matters affecting the membership of the local unions of each group."

WAGES OF PUERTO RICAN SUGAR WORKERS RAISED

Organization of sugar plantation workers in Puerto Rico is gradually improving the lot of these long-underpaid group of wage earners, according to information coming from San Juan.

The Association of Sugar Producers has announced the appointment of a committee to investigate conditions and educational facilities for workers. This action had been preceded by the signing of a new agreement, under the terms of which wages were increased about $2,000,000 annually.

END OF JURISDICTION DISPUTES IN BUILDING INDUSTRY VISIONED

Plan Approved by A. F. of L. Building Trades Department Calls for Local Arbitration Boards to Adjust Local Disputes with Review Power Vested in National Referee.

By A. F. of L. News Service.

Washington, D. C.—Jurisdiction disputes which have troubled the building industry in all parts of the United States for many years appear to be near their end under a plan developed by the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor.

The plan, approved by the Executive Council of the Building Trades Department here and sent to local building trades councils with the note that it must be adhered to in the "determination of local jurisdictional disputes," consists of eight articles, as follows:

STRIKES PROHIBITED

"ARTICLE ONE: There may be set up wherever there is a Building Trades Council and an employers association in the construction industry, an arbitration board composed of an equal number from each group, which shall temporarily determine jurisdictional disputes for that locality. The determination to be effective until such time as the dispute is reviewed by the National Referee, and shall prevent a strike, abandonment of work, or refusal to work or to go upon the job, because of jurisdictional disputes.

"ARTICLE TWO: Such local board, arbitration board, shall meet within forty-eight hours after notification of a dispute and shall render its decision within forty-eight hours thereafter.

"ARTICLE THREE: Before proceeding with the arbitration of any local jurisdictional dispute, the matter shall first be referred to the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, to ascertain if the matter in dispute has already been nationally determined.

ARBITRATION BOARD MEMBERS

"ARTICLE FOUR: Members of the arbitration board shall not act in any dispute in which their trade or company is affected and shall be temporarily replaced by alternates who have no direct connection with the dispute.

"ARTICLE FIVE: Should any local labor unit fail within twenty-four hours, or such time and work under the decision arrived at as herein set forth, then the employer shall be at liberty to fill the places with such men, members of the building trades as the employment can perform the work, and the members of such unions shall cease to work.

"ARTICLE SIX: Labor members of the local arbitration board must be members of a local union which is in international union is recognized by the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, and a bona fide building trades organization.

APPEALS TO NATIONAL REFEREE

"ARTICLE SEVEN: Local Building Trades Councils shall notify the officials of the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, when local jurisdictional disputes are determined, and a copy of the decision rendering the local arbitration board shall be filed with the officials of the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor.

"ARTICLE EIGHT: An appeal from the decision of the local board may be taken directly to the referee by any international union affected by any decision rendered by the local arbitration board as per Section Thirty-seven of the Constitution and by-laws of the Building Trades Department of the A. F. of L."

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Green Denounces Sit-Down Strike

A. F. of L. President Declares It Is Perilous to Labor and Will Inevitably Result in Repressive Legislation Depriving Workers of Hard-Won Fundamental Rights.

By A. F. of L. News Service.

Washington, D. C.—A statement denouncing sit-down strikes as an "illegal seizure of property" and as a weapon which will array public opinion against the workers was made here by William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor.

In addition, Mr. Green said, it is an instrument of combat whose use will cause the abolition of the compulsory arbitration type to deprive working men and women of the right to organize and to engage in other activities under which the workers have made great progress in improving their economic conditions.

"Both personally and officially," he declared, "I disavow the sit-down strike as a part of the economic and organization policy of the American Federation of Labor."

GREEN'S STATEMENT

The full text of Mr. Green's statement follows:

"The sit-down strike has never been approved or supported by the American Federation of Labor. Because there is involved in its application grave implications detrimental to the labor movement it cannot be disapproved by the thinking men and women of labor.

"First, public opinion will not support sit-down strikes. That means labor cannot win strikes or establish any part of it engages in sit-down strikes.

"Without such support organized labor cannot win strikes or establish and maintain itself as a vital force in the economic and industrial life of the Nation. Labor cannot afford to lose the support of public opinion.

"Second, temporary advantages gained through sit-down strikes will inevitably lead to permanent injury. Labor cannot and will not long tolerate the illegal seizure of property. If permitted it will through state and federal law-making bodies force the enactment of legislation which will result in compulsory arbitration, the incorporation of unions and other repressive forms of legislation which will destroy the hard-won labor freedom of association and liberty of action which are the foundations of both moral and statutory law.

"Such action would be a severe blow to labor.

"Labor should refrain from engaging in sit-down strikes and maintain its freedom of action and initiative rather than experiment with it and as a result be subjected to oppressive legal regulation and compulsory arbitration.

"Labor therefore runs the risk of losing more than can be gained by engaging in sit-down strikes.

"It must be free to strike against injustice and oppression and for higher wages and living standards.

"It must be permitted to picket when strikes occur. It may be subject to restricted and perhaps denied the extension of the boycott when and if it persists in engaging in sit-down strikes.

"I therefore publicly warn labor against this illegal procedure. Both personally and officially I disavow the sit-down strike as a part of the economic and organization policy of the American Federation of Labor."

Housing Legislation Delay Hit By A. F. of L. Housing Committee And Building Trades Department

Immediate Enactment of Wagner-Steagall Billion Dollar Measure to Provide Dwellings at Reasonable Rents for Low-Income Groups Is Demanded—Bill Has Been Interned in Congressional Committees Without Hearings Since February 24.

By A. F. of L. News Service.

Washington, D. C.—A strongly-worded demand for prompt consideration and enactment of the Federal Housing Bill introduced jointly in the Senate and House of Representatives by Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York and Representative Henry B. Steagall of Alabama was made here by a meeting of representatives of the American Federation of Labor Housing Committee and the A. F. of L. Building Trades Department and building trades unions at the Hamilton Hotel.

The Wagner-Steagall bill is designed to provide adequate housing for those who are financially unable to buy or rent housing accommodations sold by private interests whose sole motive is profit.

The bill proposes the establishment of a Housing Authority authorized to issue bonds, fully guaranteed by the United States Government, not to exceed $1,000,000,000 over a four-year period at the rate of $200,000,000 for the first year, $250,000,000 for the second year, $250,000,000 the third year and $300,000,000 the fourth year.

The money provided by these bonds will be used for loans to municipal, county and State housing authorities for the purpose of constructing low-rent housing on the principles set forth in the Federal Act. There is also a provision for annual grants or subsidies not to exceed $10,000,000 a year for four years to augment rents to approximately a 3-to-4-room basis.

The Wagner-Steagall bill was referred to the Senate committee on Education and Labor and the House Committee on Banking and Currency on February 24. Despite the continually increasing shortage of decent housing for inadequately-paid workers and their families, neither of these committees has begun hearings on the bill.

Million Union Members Protest Delay

The Hamilton Hotel meeting to protest against the delay by Congress in considering the Wagner-Steagall Bill was called jointly by the A. F. of L. Housing Committee, of which Harry C. Bates, president of the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers International Union, is chairman, and John Coefield, president of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters, and Michael J. Williams, president of the Operative Plasterers and Cement Finishers International Association, are members, and the Building Trades Department of the A. F. of L., of which J. W. Williams is president and Michael J. McDonough secretary.

The Building Trades Department represents building trades unions and the building trades unions, with about one million members.

Those present at the meeting, in addition to the sponsors, were John Scott, president of the International Union of Operating Engineers; John W. Garvey of the International Hod Carriers, Building and Common Laborers Union; William J. Gallagher of the Brotherhood of Painters and Decorators; Michael F. Carver of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters; Joseph McGlogan of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; James M. Myles of the Operative Plasterers and Cement Finishers International Association; C. W. Sickles of the Asbestos Workers; International Association Fred A. Tobin of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers; Warren Jay Vinton and Catherine Bauer of the Labor Housing Committee.

Bates Outlines Protest

A statement was presented to the meeting by Mr. Bates as Chairman of the American Federation of Labor Housing Committee. Mr. Bates pointed out that, in view of the increasingly acute need for low-cost housing, and the remarkable unity of all individuals, agencies and organizations interested in housing behind the Wagner-Steagall Bill, there is no excuse for the present delay. He said that if the present shortage is to be met it will be necessary without immediate drastic measures to relieve the situation, that the next few years would be "two families in every home instead of two cars in every garage."

The statement presented by Mr. Bates was enthusiastically endorsed by all those present at the conference.

Plans for organizing a strong campaign and hastening action of the Housing Bill were likewise agreed on.

Textile Conference Discusses Wages, Hours, Work Conditions

Fourteen Million Workers Affected by Agreement It Is Believed Will Result from World Meeting in Nation's Capital Held Under Auspices of International Labor Office.

By A. F. of L. News Service.

Washington, D. C.—Wages, hours of work and working conditions in the textile industry are among the problems discussed by the Conference of Textile Industry Experts in Washington April 2. The conference, which was called by the International Labor Office at the suggestion of President Roosevelt, will last about two weeks. Nearly every important textile country in the world is represented.

The discussion will affect some 14,000,000 workers in twenty countries. Of these, about 1,443,000 are in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 1,217,900 in the United States, 1,118,000 in Germany, 1,061,000 in Japan, 920,000 in France, 893,000 in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 730,000 in India, 731,000 in Italy and 599,000 in China.

The development of a plan for limiting the textile work week to a maximum of forty hours in every textile producing country is the crucial question before the conference. In case the conference adopts such an agreement it will have to be approved by the International Labor Conference of the International Labor Organization which meets in Geneva, Switzerland, next June.

Many Jobless Textile Workers

A report on world conditions in the textile industry, which has been prepared by the International Labor Office, serves as a basis for conference discussions. The report finds that labor conditions in the textile industry are "characterized not only by low wages but also by severe irregular employment, considerable shortage of work, and extensive total unemployment."

The available statistics, imperfect as they are," the report says, "clearly show that there has been considerable unemployment in the textile industry in recent years.

The effects of this unemployment has undoubtedly been due to the economic depression. In fact, the figures available do not give a complete picture of the effects of the depression as reflected in unemployment in the textile industry, as they do not cover the period in a few countries the existence of short-time work or partial unemployment which seems to have been more widespread in the textile industry than in industry as a whole.

The textile industry, it would appear, suffered much more from unemployment than other branches of the industry.

Jobs Destroyed by Machinery

Despite the continuing unemployment, the textile industry has experienced a certain amount of technological development in many countries. Mechanical improvements in the textile industry in recent years have been making rapid headway as in other industries.

"Automatic looms have been replacing old-fashioned looms, high speed spindles have supplanted low-speed ones, and continuous machines have shown a tendency to increase and have thus contributed to accentuate the tendency to accelerate, with the result that for the industry as a whole there has been complaining of the 'speed up' and the 'stretch out'.

"Some of the unemployment in the cotton textile industry has been particularly off-set in particular countries by the expansion of newer branches of the industry such as rayon. The employment of textile workers has also been affected by structural changes."

Low Wages Limit Production

Pointing out that one solution proposed for the industry's ills is the establishment of productive capacity, the report says that aside from "distressed areas" of "stranded communities" characterized by unemployment, irregular work, and a decline standards of living which may be regarded as relatively productive capacity, the problem of the textile industry "is hardly one of over-production."

"The consumption of textile goods in many countries is at a low level," says the report, "is still much below what it could be if the wages of a reasonable minimum, and below what many families in all parts of the world already are in the habit of consuming. "All the available evidence shows that as incomes of the workers increase the demand for textile goods for personal and household goods also increases. In short, the potential demand for textile goods is today as in the past, considerable."

WHEELING STOGIE MAKERS WIN LARGE WAGE INCREASE

Agreement with M. Marsh & Sons Was Negotiated by Secretary Orsburn of A. F. of L. Union Label Trades Department.

Wheeling, W. Va. (AFLNS).—I. M. Ornburn, secretary-treasurer of the Union Label Trades Department acting as representative for R. E. Van Horne, president of the Cigar Makers' International Union of America, negotiated a new agreement with the Marsh Company which provides a ten percent increase in pay for 500 hand-stogie makers, strippers, and other employes of the firm of M. Marsh and Sons of this city.

The Stogie Makers' Union is an affiliate of the Cigar Makers' International Union of America. It has a label which appears on the boxes in which union-made stogies are contained. M. Marsh and Son will continue to display the blue emblem for union-made stogies as it has done in the past.

The settlement was reached without calling a strike. Mr. Orsburn was assisted in the negotiations for the new wage scale by a local committee composed of Catherine Hartis, Lee Trow, Margaret Davidson, Anna Welnik, Margaret Criswell, Mary Conti, Roberta Snider and Elvira Mingroni.